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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 HANOI 003384

SIPDIS

BANGKOK FOR USAID/RDM-A

STATE FOR G; CA/OCS/ACS/EAP; EAP/EX; EAP/MLS; EAP/EP; INR;  
OES/STC (PBATES); OES/IHA (DSINGER AND NCOMELLA)  
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, USAID/RDM/A (MFRIEDMAN AND JMACARTHUR)  
USDA FOR FAS/PASS TO APHIS  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP (LSTERN)  
USAID FOR ANE AND GH (DCARROLL, SCLEMENTS AND PCHAPLIN)  
STATE PASS USTR (ELENA BRYAN)  
STATE ALSO PASS HHS/OGHA (EELVANDER)  
ROME FOR FAO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AMED](#) [AMGT](#) [CASC](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [SOCI](#) [PGOV](#) [TBIO](#) [VM](#) [AFLU](#)  
SUBJECT: VIETNAM: AVIAN INFLUENZA WEEKLY REPORT FOR DECEMBER  
29, 2005

REF: Hanoi 3353

[1](#)1. (U) Summary. There have been no new human Avian Influenza (AI) deaths in Vietnam since October 29. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) issued a circular guiding the quarantine, transport and sale of poultry and poultry products. Post's Marine Attache observed four disinfection checkpoints in provinces in northern Vietnam. The number of animal AI affected provinces in Vietnam continues to drop from a high of 21 in mid-November to seven this week, however, MARD has confirmed that there are suspected outbreaks in Quang Tri and Ha Giang provinces. Prime Minister Phan Van Khai declared that despite some success in controlling the spread of AI, outbreaks remain a high risk and called for continued vigilance. The Ministry of Health (MOH) gave instructions for strict monitoring of foreigners entering Vietnam from countries affected by AI. Newspapers reported on a small study published in the New England Journal of Medicine suggesting Tamiflu resistance in two patients. End Summary.

AI SNAPSHOT

[1](#)2. (U) As of December 27, 2006:

--Number of New Human AI Cases in Vietnam since October 29:  
zero  
--Current Number of Provinces still affected by AI in  
poultry: seven  
--Estimated number of poultry culled since October 1: 3.8  
million

NEW ISSUES

[1](#)3. (U) There have been no new cases of human Avian Influenza. The GVN confirmed that a suspected human AI case in Soc Trang province in southern Vietnam tested negative for H5N1. In reference to this case, the Pasteur Institute commented that recently it has been receiving specimens from between one to three suspected AI cases a day, mostly from the Mekong Delta region. All have tested negative for H5N1.

[1](#)4. (U) MARD officials have confirmed that there is a suspected recurrence of AI in Quang Tri Province in central Vietnam, where 231 waterfowl have died. In response, 1,180 poultry have been culled, and tests are underway to determine whether the birds were infected with AI. In Ha Giang Province in northern Vietnam, 19 geese are suspected to have died of AI. Fifty-six geese have been culled, and tests are underway to determine whether the birds were infected with AI.

[1](#)5. (U) With demand for poultry rising in anticipation of Tet, Vietnam's Lunar New Year holiday, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) issued a circular on December 23 guiding the quarantine, transport and sale of poultry and poultry products. The sale of poultry and poultry products originating from provinces with no AI outbreaks in 2005 is unrestricted. Poultry and poultry products originating in provinces that experienced an AI outbreak in 2005 but have been outbreak free for over 21 days may be sold after a quarantine period. Poultry and poultry products originating in provinces that experienced an outbreak within the last 21 days may be sold only if they come from outbreak-free commercial farms where the poultry received two vaccine injections, or from outbreak-free farms where the poultry were not vaccinated, but that have tested negative for the H5N1 virus. Eggs from these poultry farms can be sold after a quarantine period. While this government action may be a positive development for poultry farm owners, it remains to be seen whether it will translate

into consumer confidence.

16. (SBU) Post's Marine Attache (MARA) observed four disinfection checkpoints while traveling in Bac Giang, Bac Kan, Cao Bang and Lang Son provinces in northern Vietnam December 20-22. Checkpoint personnel including border guards, army soldiers, Ministry of Public Security police, forestry officials and civilians, stopped vehicles (though not motorbikes) and sprayed their tires. The MARA was told that the spray was liquid disinfectant used in an effort to prevent transmission of the virus between regions. Discipline appeared to be lax and coverage inconsistent at two checkpoints, as no effort was made to stop the MARA's vehicle at one checkpoint, and no staff was visible at another. However, at two other checkpoints staff appeared to take the matter seriously and their actions were prompt and efficient.

17. (U) Denmark donated USD 600,000 worth of veterinary equipment to MARD, including automatic sprayers, protective clothing, rubber boots and gloves, as well as 20,000 liters of disinfectant in order to aid Vietnam in the fight against AI. Denmark donated an additional USD 400,000 to assist with an AI public information campaign. Germany donated USD 5.3 million to aid Vietnam in its effort to combat AI.

18. (U) At a December 24 session of the Working Group on AI in Ho Chi Minh City, Prime Minister Phan Van Khai cautioned that although preventive measures have had some success, the risk of AI outbreaks remains high. He stressed that the poultry vaccination program must continue, and a long-term plan for the livestock industry, with a focus on commercial farms and slaughterhouses needs to be developed. He also advised that the Ministry of Trade has been instructed to distribute certified poultry and poultry products in the upcoming Tet period, when demand increases. The Ministry of Health has instructed strict monitoring of foreigners entering Vietnam from countries known to have been affected by AI, and has identified cooperation between the Vietnamese local border authorities and their counterparts as a critical measure.

19. (U) A number of newspapers reported on a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine on the resistance of Vietnamese patients to Tamiflu. The study, conducted on eight patients, showed that two who died had developed signs of resistance to Tamiflu, and suggests that the use of higher doses and longer treatment may be necessary for some patients. The small study sample should be taken into consideration when assessing the effectiveness of Tamiflu, however, medical experts, including one of the study's co-authors, continue to consider Tamiflu to be an important defense against the H5N1 virus.

MARINE